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NEWS WORTH SHARING.

Beheading of U.S. aid worker 'an act of pure evil'

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Accused phoney soldier arrested

Man arrested after allegedly appearing on TV in uniform at Remembrance Day service PAGE 4

GETTING SOUPED UP!

YOU CAN'T DO ANYTHING ABOUT THE COLD WEATHER — MAY AS WELL EMBRACE THE ARRIVAL OF SOUP SEASON PAGE 20

LESS THAN 12 PARSECS

From left, Lego fans Caroline Viola, Florence Poirier and Martin Poirier check out a Millennium Falcon constructed from Lego at the Brickfete event held in the basement of the St. Elias Antiochian Orthodox Cathedral Sunday. The weekend-long event gathered Lego enthusiasts from around the capital. For more on the story and the amazing creations, turn to page 6. DENIS ARMSTRONG/FOR METRO

Ottawa food inspectors can't keep up

'High-risk food establishments.' City not meeting provincial inspection targets, report finds

The city's food inspectors are not on track to meet their inspection targets in the third quarter of 2014 due to an ongoing lack of resources, says an Ottawa Board of Health report.

But, for the board, this does not come as a surprise.

As per a provincial payment agreement adopted in 2011, the Ministry of Health had proposed to have the board agree to have 98.4 per cent of "high-risk food establishments" inspected once every four months while in operation.

The city defines a high-risk food establishment as one that handles a large quantity of hazardous products such as poultry and beef, which are often associated with food-borne illnesses.

The board didn't think the Ministry's target was attainable, so it had proposed a lower target of 96.5 per cent, but the province rejected it.

"OPH has reiterated to the Ministry the challenge to meet this (higher) target given our unique local context that requires over one thousand additional food inspections for special events combined with inadequate resourcing levels," reads a Sept. 15 board report.

The report went on to say, "Redeployment of inspectors, the reduction of other program activities and unbudgeted overtime have been necessary in order to meet the target."

Preliminary Q3 data in a report to be discussed Monday at the Ottawa Board of Health meeting shows the city will indeed fall short of its inspection rate targets for both high-risk and "moderate-risk" food establishments.

JOE LOFARO/METRO

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First major snowfall of the season hits Ottawa

Prepared? The snow that began Sunday evening is expected to leave upwards of 10-15 centimetres by tonight's commute

The winter weather that's battered the American Midwest with record snowfalls and icy temperatures is heading our way and bringing with it Ottawa's first major snowfall.

The snow that began Sunday evening is expected to leave upwards of 10 or 15 centimetres of by tonight's commute.

With temperatures hovering just above 1 C, the morning drive to work will be slushy, forecasters say, but plummeting temperatures could mean treacherous icy conditions as you head home.

Temperatures for the rest of the week will remain 5 to 8 C below normal as the cold air that brought record low temperatures and snowfall expands across the U.S. and settles over Ontario.

AccuWeather.com meteorologist Dave Samuhels said, however, that we shouldn't expect a winter as harsh as that of 2013-2014.

"The Ottawa capital region can expect a normal winter, with slightly higher levels of accumulated snowfall and slightly lower temperatures. Other than that, we don't see any unusual weather patterns for the region for the foreseeable future."

In case you are feeling sorry for yourself as you watch the white fluffy flakes descend upon the Capital region, take a moment to think about our fellow Ontarians in the Haliburton area east of Georgian Bay. They were expected to receive 20 centimetres of snow by the end of Sunday and that was only the first of three major snow events forecast for the region. Snow is expected to persist throughout the week in that area.

"Because of the lake effect they are getting whacked with a lot of snow. But that's about the extent of the snow activity we are seeing in Ontario," said Ronald Lee, a severe weather meteorologist for Environment Canada.

Ottawa, by comparison, is getting off lightly.

"It's not a big storm, it's an overnight dusting that will last into the Monday evening commute," he said.

DENIS ARMSTRONG/FOR METRO

Driving dangers

- Ottawa police said they investigated nine crashes Sunday and cautioned drivers to take extra care on the roads given the forecast.
- "With the first snowfall of the season, the Ottawa Police Service are asking drivers to be mindful of the increasingly slippery road conditions. We are asking the public to drive according to these conditions, to slow down, provide for extra distance between vehicles, and limit driving if possible," Staff Sgt. Brad Hamspon said in an email.

Ottawa resident Andrew Harward, who snapped this photo Sunday afternoon, said he was drawn to the footsteps left on this snowy path next to the Ottawa River near the New Edinburgh Club Boathouse. ANDREW HARWARD/CONTRIBUTED

Charity. Snowsuit Fund gala raises $80,000

More than 350 guests attended the annual Snowsuit Fund gala Saturday night, which raised more than $80,000 for underprivileged kids in the Ottawa area.

Ottawa Senators defenceman Chris Phillips and his wife, Erin, attended the gala dinner inside the Fairmont Château Laurier with Snowsuit Fund board chair, Lianne Laing.

The goal of the annual event is to help keep children 15 and under warm every winter.

Anyone wishing to donate a new or used snowsuit can still do so by visiting any Canadian Tire store or Brown's Cleaners.

Cash donations are also accepted at the rear entrance of The Snowsuit Fund Depot at 225 Donald St., unit 134.

METRO

Update

New dates set for postponed 67's games

Ice conditions in Ottawa last weekend have postponed two regular season Ottawa 67's games.

The 67's will host the North Bay Battalion on Jan. 6, 2015 and the Oshawa Generals on Jan. 27, 2015. Both games start at 7 p.m. METRO

Getting into the spirit

Mayor hosting Christmas bash

City Hall will be transformed into a winter wonderland on Dec. 6 for Mayor Jim Watson's annual Christmas celebration.

Guests must bring a non-perishable food item to participate. Ice skating will be available on the Rink of Dreams and horse-drawn carriage rides will be up for grabs, as well. METRO

Baseball

New Champions schedule out

Ottawa's newly-minted Can-Am baseball team the Ottawa Champions announced their 2015 schedule Sunday. The club will play a total of 50 home games during the inaugural 2015 season. Spring training will begin May 10 through May 20 at Ottawa Stadium, and the first game will be May 22. METRO

Ottawa Pop Expo returns with stars from Buffy, Doctor Who

Includes screenings of Canadian short films. Organizer hoping to surpass last year's attendance estimate of 7,000

JOE LOFARO
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Cliff Caporale is bringing the pop culture back to Ottawa Pop Expo next weekend.

The event's programming director is shifting gears for the second edition this year by focusing more on pop icons such as James Marsters, who played Spike on Buffy the Vampire Slayer, and Doctor Who's John Barrowman.

While the stars from AMC's The Walking Dead took over the inaugural event in 2013 to much fanfare, Caporale — who also runs Ottawa Comiccon — said it's hard to separate a comic book theme from Pop Expo.

"We still have comic books. We're not going to get rid of them entirely, because there is a fan base that enjoys that and is built on the base of that with a lot of these pop culture events," said Caporale.

"But, it's not the huge guest list of comic book guests that we have, for example, at Ottawa Comiccon, where it's three to four times the size compared to the celebrity guests."

Organizers are also going to try experimenting with screenings of mostly Canadian-made short films this year, including Brett Kelly's Ottawa film, Spyfall — a musical spoof of the James Bond film, Sky Fall.

Caporale said the event has a future in this city because Ottawa has a sweet spot for pop culture. With that in mind, he's hoping to surpass last year's estimated attendance of 7,000.

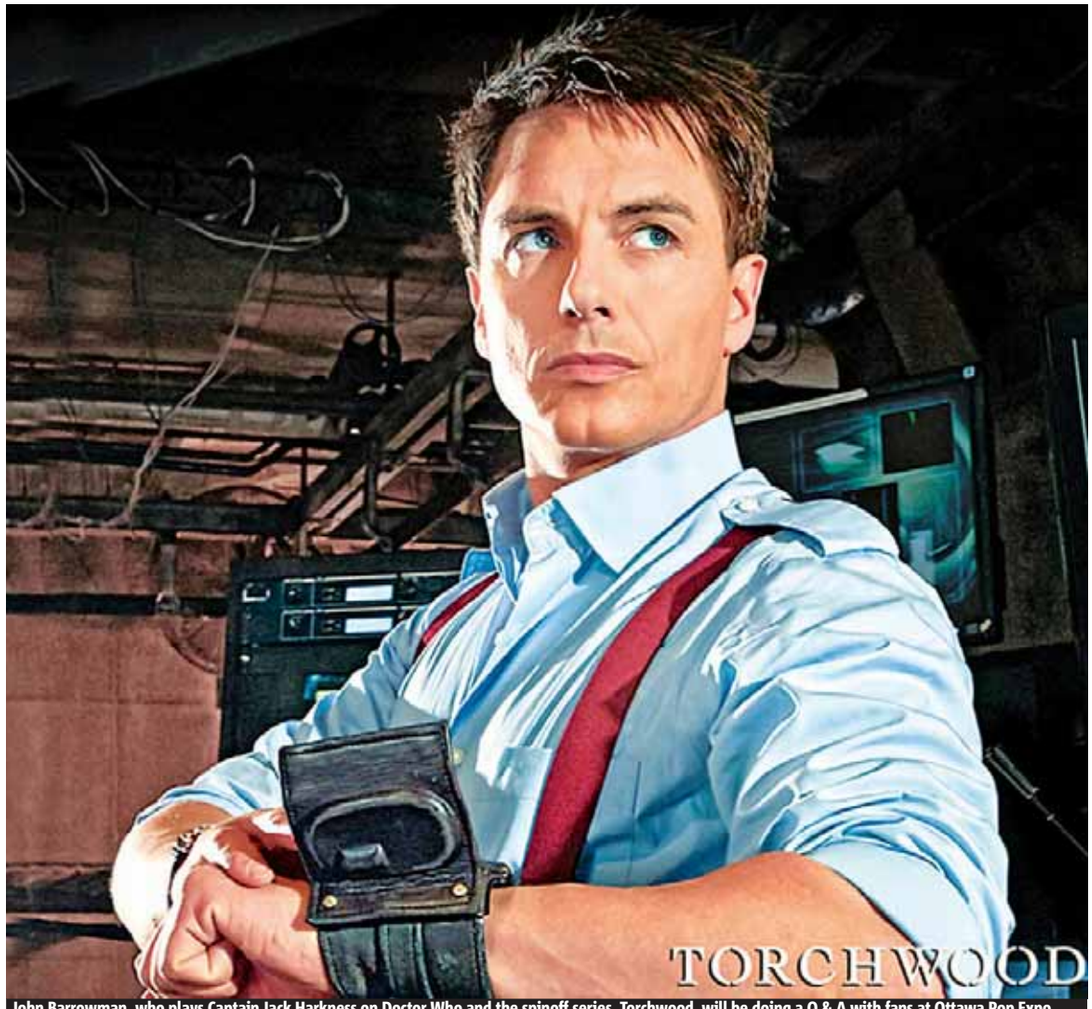
He's toying with the idea of adding a video-game element next year.

Ottawa Pop Expo runs Saturday to Sunday at the EY Centre. General admission tickets are $25 for a day pass or $40 for a two-day pass. For more information, visit ottawapopexpo.ca.

Event

Popping up at the Pop Expo

- The 2014 event will see the return of Walking Dead star — Emily Kinney, who plays Beth — but the main highlight of the event, Caporale said, will be John Barrowman, who will do a fan Q&A on Saturday.
- The 47-year-old actor is also known for reclaiming his role of Captain Jack Harkness in the spinoff TV series, Torchwood.
- Also on the Q&A roster for Saturday will be James Marsters and his former Buffy co-star, Emma Caufield.



John Barrowman, who plays Captain Jack Harkness on Doctor Who and the spinoff series, Torchwood, will be doing a Q & A with fans at Ottawa Pop Expo Saturday, Nov. 22. CONTRIBUTED

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Police charge man with personating Canadian soldier

'Quite a shock.' Franck Gervais arrested after appearing in uniform on TV during Remembrance Day ceremony in Ottawa

A Quebec man accused of impersonating a soldier at a Remembrance Day ceremony this week has been arrested and faces four charges.

Ottawa police said in a news release Saturday evening that Franck Gervais of Cantley, Que., appeared at a police station earlier that day and that he was arrested, charged and released.

Gervais, 32, is scheduled to appear in court on Dec. 9.

Gervais faces two counts of personating a public officer and two counts of the unlawful use of military uniforms.

The impersonation of a Canadian Armed Forces member, including wearing the uniform or medals associated with the Forces, is against the law.

Gervais had allegedly presented himself as a sergeant of the Canadian Armed Forces in a televised interview with the CBC during a ceremony at the National War Memorial on Remembrance Day.

According to the CBC, a number of soldiers and veterans soon called to question his status.

Gervais has since been suspended with pay by his employer, Potvin Construction, an Ottawa-area company with whom he has worked for 12 years.

Martin Savard, Potvin's general manager, said on Friday that it was "quite a shock" to learn of the allegations, and said the company is turning to legal and public-relations experts to help them manage the situation.

Police said investigations are still ongoing.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Tipped off

A veteran told Torstar News Service that Gervais had made numerous errors in wearing his uniform and also kept a beard, which soldiers are normally not allowed to do.

The CBC interviewed a man who has now been charged with impersonating a soldier after he wore a uniform at the Remembrance Day ceremony in Ottawa, making him appear to be a decorated military sergeant. CBC

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From left brothers Jack, William and Desmond Hubert check out a plastic winter wonderland. DENIS ARMSTRONG/FOR METRO

A child looks over a Lego replica of Louise Bourgeois' iconic giant spider sculpture outside the National Gallery of Canada. DENIS ARMSTRONG/FOR METRO

'Lego is the perfect toy for your imagination'

Brickfête. Lego re-awakens imaginations and brings families together, enthusiast says

DENIS ARMSTRONG
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Lego fans of all ages packed St. Elias' church basement over the weekend as Brickfête, the annual celebration of all things Lego, came to Ottawa for the first time.

First organized by the event's co-founder Chris Magno in Toronto in 2010, it began as a place for a few serious Lego geeks — or AFOLs (Adult Fans of Lego) as they're called in Lego parlance — to show off the most imaginative thing they've created with the brightly coloured plastic interlocking blocks. It's quickly become the Comic-Con of the toy world.

Brickfête offers a chance for serious Lego builders of all ages to admire the amazing things that dedicated, imaginative people can do.

The 200-plus models on display ran the gamut of fantasy worlds, with such classic Lego favourites as Tudor villages, castles, military weaponry and pirate ships vying for eyeballs with more contemporary-themed constructions like Batman, space ships and Star Wars characters. The more fantastic, the better, it appeared.

What began 90 years ago as a simple children's toy has recently evolved into a genuine pop-cult phenomenon, a family-friendly toy shared by multiple generations.

That was clear on Sunday; parents were as excited as their children to see the mind-blowing imaginative creations.

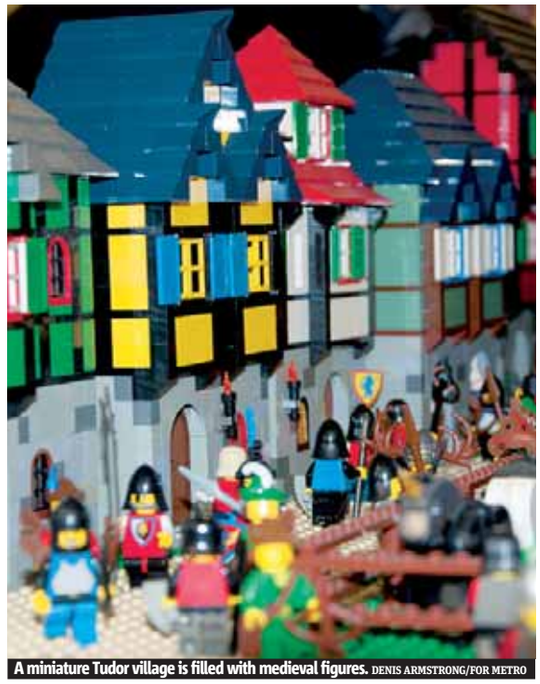
"We've had a phenomenal reaction from people in Ottawa," said Magno.

"People here are artistic and Lego is the perfect toy for your imagination. It teaches children essential skills, and it's creative fun for adults, as you can see."

Lucie Filteau only recently started making a model of Ottawa's historic Civic Hospital — where she works as an anesthesiologist — in order to spend more time with her husband Emmet and her son Nathan. Both avid Legoists were stationed directly across the aisle from mom, showing off the fully operating scale VIA train set they built.

"I haven't played with anything for years," admitted Filteau, dressed as the character Wyldestyle from the Lego Movie.

"Playing with Lego re-awakened my imagination. It's something the whole family can do together.



A miniature Tudor village is filled with medieval figures. DENIS ARMSTRONG/FOR METRO

Lego newbie and anesthesiologist Lucie Filteau says she built this operating theatre after another builder advised , "Do what you know." DENIS ARMSTRONG/FOR METRO

Lucie Filteau's facade of the Civic Campus of the Ottawa Hospital took her a year to build and is only the first step. She plans to build out the back into a "proper dollhouse." DENIS ARMSTRONG/FOR METRO

Kids gather around a giant Lego sandbox to make their own fun. DENIS ARMSTRONG/FOR METRO

Lisa Slater, the Whole Foods Market store team leader, poses outside the new Lansdowne Park location, which will open on Wednesday. CONTRIBUTED

Glebe gets Ottawa's 1st Whole Foods

Hipsters' paradise.
High-end grocery chain set to open in Landsdowne Park

Opening day

Whole Foods opens at 951 Bank St. on Wednesday.

LUCY SCHOLEY
lucy.scholey@metronews.ca

Glebe grocery shoppers will have more aisles to peruse when Whole Foods Market opens at the redeveloped Lansdowne Park on Wednesday.

The international chain boasts that it sets a high bar for suppliers — like seeking out local producers and creating "animal welfare standards" for its meat department.

According to its website, Whole Foods has "the strictest quality standards in the industry" and "an unshakeable commitment to sustainable agriculture."

The shelves of the 39,000-square-foot facility will be stocked with products from more than 100 Ontario and Quebec producers.

Ottawa is a new market for Whole Foods, which started in Austin, Texas in 1980 and grew to 360 stores in North America and the U.K.

Lansdowne Park appeals to the company because it's one of the few spots in Ottawa close to downtown that allows for a big grocery space, said Lisa Slater, the Whole Foods Market store team leader. But, she said, the neighbourhood is also in line with the ethos of Whole Foods.

"We found that the Glebe has a highly educated population," she said. "We're actually near three universities and all of that provides a customer base that cares about the environment, cares about what they're eating and wants to learn more."

Although Whole Foods may be known to open in more affluent or up-and-coming neighbourhoods, Slater said that's not necessarily the case anymore. The company opened a location in downtown Detroit and has plans to move into a downtrodden neighbourhood in Chicago.

Stubbing out contraband tobacco

Finance Minister Charles Sousa is taking aim at the "underground economy" with hopes of bringing in an additional $700 million to the treasury over the next four years, Torstar News Service has learned.

Sousa will use Monday's fall economic statement to announce a new push by the cash-strapped Liberal government to clamp down on contraband tobacco and tax cheats.

"It's about fairness," a senior government official said.

Saddled with a $12.5-billion budget deficit for 2014-15 — and aiming to balance the books by 2017-18 — the treasurer will tout the new multi-pronged strategy to collect more revenue.

"We're going after contraband tobacco," said the official, who spoke on condition of anonymity in order to freely discuss policy changes that will not be made public until Monday afternoon.

With an estimated 40 per cent of the cigarettes smoked in Ontario being untaxed — because they are manufactured on First Nations reserves then illegally distributed throughout the province — the Liberals are expected to step up enforcement.

Over the past six years, some 235 million contraband cigarettes have been seized by police.

But that's just a small amount of the smokes smuggled off reserves into cities where they are sold — often to children and teens — for far less than legal, taxed tobacco.

The major tobacco manufacturers have long lobbied the Ontario government to follow Quebec's lead and clamp down on smuggling.

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G20 Australia. Canada to contribute to UN climate fund, Harper announces

Canada will soon contribute to a United Nations climate fund that helps impoverished nations cope with climate change and to develop cleaner sources of energy, Prime Minister Stephen Harper said Sunday.

The pledge, made at the end of the Group of 20 summit in Australia, comes on the heels of an announcement by U.S. President Barack Obama that the U.S. is contributing $3 billion to the Green Climate Fund.

"We want to see and we will be part of an international agreement of binding obligations on all major emitters," Harper told a news conference after praising the recent climate deal signed between the U.S. and China.

"For the first time, that is actually starting to take shape so that's something we welcome and something we'll contribute to ... we've always contributed to these international climate financing initiatives, and we'll announce our own contributions to it in the not-too distant future." THE CANADIAN PRESS

Prime Minister Stephen Harper holds a koala at the G20 summit in Brisbane, Australia, on Saturday. ANDREW TAYLOR/G20 AUSTRALIA/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

For more G20 coverage, see page 10

Ghomeshi scandal. Key to stopping sexual assault is teaching consent: Experts

Sexual assault allegations against former CBC Radio host Jian Ghomeshi have sparked a national conversation about how to facilitate the reporting of such incidents, but some advocates say the focus should instead be on prevention.

A key to stopping sexual assaults from happening in the first place is education about the legal landscape, says Kim Stanton of the Women's Legal Education and Action Fund.

"It's so important to educate young people on the law of consent and the fact that consent is something that has to be renewed at every stage, it can't just be assumed," she says.

Nine women have come forward with allegations that Ghomeshi assaulted them. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Quoted

"We need to have young people understanding what a healthy relationship looks like."

Education Minister Liz Sandals, who added that "video games and rock videos ... are not portrayals of healthy relationships."

Civil liberties

Top Toronto cop to face hearing over mass G20 arrests

A long-delayed disciplinary hearing is finally slated to start Wednesday for the most senior police officer charged in relation to the mass violation of civil rights during the G20 summit in Toronto four years ago.

Civil liberties groups said they would be closely watching the proceedings against Supt. David (Mark) Fenton, given the detentions of more than 1,000 people. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Toronto

Shooting at crowded eatery leaves man dead

Toronto police are searching for two suspects after a brazen shooting at a packed downtown restaurant that killed one man and sent two women to hospital.

Police say the group was eating around 4 a.m. Sunday when they got into a dispute. He says two of the suspects then pulled out guns, with one opening fire.

Tariq Mohamed, 32, was pronounced dead at the scene. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Wind-farm opponents hoping to have their say at appeal

A wind turbine is seen in Melancthon Township, Ont., on Sunday. Groups opposed to industrial-size wind farms are looking to intervene in a landmark appeal that begins Monday against one of Ontario's largest wind-energy projects. The constitutional challenge before divisional court focuses on claims by farm families concerned about the potential health effects of living as close as 500 metres to the turbines. COLIN PERKEL/THE CANADIAN PRESS

News media call for Bourque evidence to be made public

New Brunswick. Lawyers to argue about access to trial exhibits, including videotaped confession of man who killed three Mounties

Quoted

"This case where you have this kind of ambush and premeditated gunning down of RCMP members is a public interest in Winnipeg, just like it's a public interest ... in Moncton."

Lawyer David Coles, who represents media organizations, including The Canadian Press, that have asked for access to exhibits used at Justin Bourque's sentencing hearing

Lawyers will be in a New Brunswick courtroom Monday to argue whether exhibits entered as evidence at Justin Bourque's sentencing should be made public, including a videotaped police interview where he admits to shooting three RCMP officers dead and wounding two others.

Bourque was sentenced last month to life in prison with no eligibility for parole for 75 years, after pleading guilty to three counts of first-degree murder and two counts of attempted murder. The penalty is the harshest Canada has seen since the last state-sanctioned executions in 1962.

A number of news media organizations, including The Canadian Press, have asked for access to the exhibits that were used at his sentencing hearing.

Lawyers for Bourque and the Crown are opposing the request.

David Coles, the lawyer representing the media, said the public has a right to see and hear the evidence.

"It seems to me the Canadian people have a right to review the evidence upon which the chief justice made the decision that was appropriate," Coles said. "We live in a society where, unfortunately over the past several years, a multiplicity of our peace officers have been gunned down and one has to ask, 'Are the protocols appropriate? Are their orders appropriate? Is their equipment sufficient?'" THE CANADIAN PRESS

Byelection to replace late Flaherty turning ugly

A closer-than-expected byelection contest to fill the void left by Jim Flaherty's death has turned nasty down the home stretch.

The late finance minister took Whitby-Oshawa with a comfortable 58 per cent of the vote in 2011 and Conservatives are pulling out all the stops to keep the Ontario riding Tory blue in Monday's vote.

They're running a high-profile candidate, former two-term Whitby mayor Pat Perkins.

The Liberals suggest their own candidate, Celina Caesar-Chavannes, an entrepreneur, research consultant and political newcomer, is less than 10 points behind Perkins in polls.

In a sign of how hot the Whitby-Oshawa contest has become over the past few weeks, various media outlets were alerted to documents that raised questions about some of Perkins' mayoral expenses.

These included trips to real estate conferences in Las Vegas and Cannes, France, the installation of a back door to her office, a $345-a-night hotel room for a conference in Ottawa, as well as her handling of two funds controlled by the mayor.

Perkins did not respond to a request for an interview, but a spokesman said all expenses were above-board, as was her handling of a Whitby performing arts centre fund and a community development fund.

"Our opposition has been spreading (the documents) to every media outlet from here through to Ottawa for a few weeks now in an attempt to smear Ms. Perkins throughout this campaign," Wiebe Bergsma said in an email. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Obama slams beheading of U.S. aid worker as 'an act of pure evil'

About a dozen others also killed. The White House confirmed the death of U.S. aid worker Peter Kassig, the fifth Westerner killed by ISIL

The Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) released a video Sunday of a masked militant standing over a severed head it claimed was Peter Kassig, a former U.S. soldier-turned-aid worker who was taken hostage while delivering relief supplies to Syrians caught in that country's brutal civil war.

Hours later, the White House confirmed Kassig's death after a review of the video, which also showed the beheadings of a dozen Syrian soldiers.

Kassig, 26, a former Army Ranger who returned to the Middle East to help wounded and displaced Syrians, "was taken from us in an act of pure evil by a terrorist group that the world rightly associates with inhumanity," President Barack Obama said in a statement. He denounced the extremist group, which he said "revels in the slaughter of innocents, including Muslims, and is bent only on sowing death and destruction."

With Kassig's death, ISIL has killed five Westerners it was holding. American journalists James Foley and Steven Sotloff were beheaded, as were British aid workers David Haines and Alan Henning. Unlike previous videos of slain Western hostages, the footage released Sunday did not show the decapitation of Kassig or the moments leading up to his death.

"This is Peter Edward Kassig, a U.S. citizen … who fought against the Muslims in Iraq," said the black-clad militant, who spoke with a British accent that was distorted in the video, apparently to disguise his identity. Previous videos featured a militant with a British accent that the FBI says it has identified, though it hasn't named him publicly. The video appeared on websites used in the past by ISIL, which now controls a third of Syria and Iraq.

This undated file photo provided by the Kassig Family shows Peter Kassig standing in front of a truck filled with supplies for Syrian refugees. COURTESY KASSIG FAMILY/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

The video also showed the beheadings of about a dozen men, identified as Syrian military officers and pilots. A black-clad militant warns that U.S. soldiers will meet a similar fate.

Kassig's family said in a statement that they preferred that he "is written about and remembered for his important work and the love he shared with friends and family, not in the manner the hostage takers would use to manipulate Americans and further their cause." THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Captured in Syria

Peter Kassig captured while delivering aid

Peter Kassig first experienced the Middle East as a soldier, then returned as a student and, finally, as a humanitarian intent on helping those whose lives were upended by the brutal civil war in Syria.

Kassig was captured last year in eastern Syria while delivering relief supplies to refugees of Syria's civil war. The Indianapolis man, a former U.S. Army Ranger who founded a relief organization, converted to Islam while in captivity and took the first name Abdul-Rahman.

Amateur footage of Flight 17 downing shows alarm in village

In this image from amateur video taken on July 17, 2014, and obtained by The Associated Press, men stand near the wreckage of Malaysia Airlines Flight 17 near the village of Hrabove, eastern Ukraine. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Four months after Malaysia Airlines Flight 17 was shot down over rebel-held eastern Ukraine, The Associated Press has obtained video that shows how close the burning passenger jet came to hitting village homes and suggests that residents first assumed it was a Ukrainian military plane that had been struck.

The amateur footage, filmed by a resident of Hrabove, shows people reacting in alarm as wreckage blazes only a few meters away from their homes on the afternoon of July 17. The video is perhaps the first taken immediately after the plane came down.

The ultimate cause of the MH17 disaster is the subject of major diplomatic disputes. Ukraine and Western government say Russia-backed separatist fighters fired the rockets that felled the plane, while state-run television in Moscow over the weekend produced evidence it claims places blame with Ukraine's air force.

All 298 people aboard the Boeing 777 flying from Amsterdam to Kuala Lumpur were killed when it was shot down over a rebel-held area. Charred remains of the aircraft are scattered around fields over an area of 20 square kilometres.

Workers on Sunday began collecting debris from the crash site, under the supervision of Dutch investigators and officials from the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe. The recovered fragments will be loaded onto trains and taken to the government-controlled eastern city of Kharkiv. The investigation into what happened to MH17 is being conducted there and in the Netherlands.

The recovery operations have been delayed amid continued fighting between government troops and separatist fighters. A truce was agreed upon in September, but hostilities have raged on nonetheless.

In the video obtained on Sunday by AP, residents of the village of Hrabove can be heard asking about the whereabouts of the pilot. This is significant because multiple Ukrainian military planes had been shot down by this time, and their pilots and crew regularly taken prisoner by rebel forces.

Three days before the MH17 was brought down, rebels claimed responsibility for shooting down an Antonov-24 military transport plane. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Christian enclave

Chibok recaptured by Nigerian forces

The Nigerian army has regained control of Chibok, the northeastern town where more than 200 schoolgirls were kidnapped by Islamic extremists more than six months ago, said army officials.

The army wrested back control of Chibok on Saturday, about 48 hours after it had been captured by the Islamic militants of Boko Haram, Nigerian army spokesman Brigadier General Olajide Olaleye said.

Chibok is an enclave of mainly Christian families, some involved in translating the Bible into local languages, in the mainly Muslim north of Nigeria. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Nebraska hospital

Ebola-infected surgeon remains 'extremely ill'

A surgeon who contracted Ebola while working in Sierra Leone was in extremely critical condition Sunday at a Nebraska hospital, his doctors said.

Dr. Martin Salia, 44, who was diagnosed with Ebola on Monday, arrived in Omaha on Saturday to be treated at the Nebraska Medical Center.

Salia is "extremely ill," said Dr. Phil Smith, who is helping oversee Salia's treatment. Ebola has killed over 5,000 people in West Africa, mostly in Liberia, Guinea and Sierra Leona. Of the 10 people treated for the virus in the U.S., all but one has recovered. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Choosing a new leader

Burkina Faso officials sign election charter

Burkina Faso officials signed a charter on Sunday intended to guide the country toward elections as various factions submitted nominations for an interim head of state to replace longtime President Blaise Compaore, who abruptly stepped down last month.

Politicians and representatives of the army, civil society and religious and traditional leaders participated in the signing ceremony in the capital, Ouagadougou. An interim president was expected to be named Sunday, while a new prime minister was expected to be appointed by Wednesday. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Inventing 'an unstealable bike'

Uphill battle. After Chilean student's bike stolen, he and two friends set out to solve a common problem

It's a bicyclist's dream: a bike that can't be stolen.

The Yerka, a prototype designed by three young Chilean engineering students, is the latest entry in a recent trend of bikes that can be locked using some of their own parts.

They include Brooklyn-based Seatylock, which uses its saddle seat as a lock, and Seattle-based Denny, which is locked with its detachable handlebars.

But the inventors of the Yerka have a new twist on that approach: The bike's lower frame opens up into two arms that are then connected to the seat post and locked to a post, so thieves would have to destroy a Yerka to get it unlocked, leaving it valueless.

"That's why our motto is 'A bike that gets stolen is no longer a bike.' What we have here is truly an unstealable bike," said Cristobal Cabello, who came up with the design during a college engineering class with childhood friends Andres Roi Eggers and Juan Jose Monsalve.

In Chile and elsewhere in Latin America, the spread of designated cycling lanes, storage racks and bike-share programs are encouraging commuters to switch from cars to bikes, which are cheaper and environmentally friendly.

Cristobal Galban, who holds a doctorate in naval and environmental engineering and is director of the sustainability research centre at Santiago's Andres Bello University, said a study by his team in 2013 found that "the use of bikes has doubled among Chileans" in five years.

"The main problem in Chile and elsewhere is the robberies, so the Yerka could help solve this," said Galban, whose own bike was recently stolen.

Cristobal Cabello poses for a picture with the Yerka Project, a prototype for an "unstealable bike," at a bicycle trail in Santiago, Chile. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS FILE

The young engineers said they began experimenting with their idea after Roi's bicycle was stolen. First they built a PVC model, then constructed a working prototype.

Now, while waiting for the patent to be approved and carrying out more tests on the bike's resistance to thieves, the team plans to launch a crowdfunding campaign seeking to raise funds.

The dvelopers are also looking for a partner who can invest $300,000 US needed to produce a first batch of 1,000 bikes that they hope will be sold by mid-2015.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Spinning wheels

Tony Hadland, co-author with Hans-Erhard Lessing of Bicycle Design: An Illustrated History, called the Chileans' design "very clever."

- Leaving aside the familiar shackle locks and chains with locks, most anti-theft accessories have been bolt-on devices, he said. The latter usually involve a piece that passes between the spokes to stop the wheel rotating, but they can still be easily picked open by a thief, he said.
- "The most effective strategy commonly used in London today is to take the bike into the office with you," Hadland said.

G20 leaders make long list of promises

The communiqué issued by a weekend summit of the 20 biggest wealthy and developing economies spanned issues from boosting growth to combatting corruption. Here are some of the commitments made by G20 leaders after two days of meetings in Brisbane, Australia.

Growth
Leaders finalized a plan outlined by their finance ministers early this year to boost the world economy. Through 1,000 policy measures, 800 of which are new, they hope to add $2 trillion US to world GDP by 2018 on top of the growth already expected. World GDP this year is about $77 trillion.

An assessment of the initiatives by the IMF and OECD says their clarity and concreteness has increased but some remain "insufficiently precise."

Women at work
The G20 nations want to see 100 million more women in employment by 2025.

That will require reducing the barriers to female participation in the workforce. It would reduce poverty and inequality and boost economic growth. But the communiqué does not say how this new goal will be achieved.

Tax evasion
To prevent cross-border tax evasion by corporations and wealthy individuals, G20 countries agreed to automatically exchange tax information with each other and with other nations by 2018 at the latest.

That is part of an ongoing effort to stop multinational companies lowering their tax bills by moving profits from the country where they are earned to places with lower tax rates.

Infrastructure hub
To be located in Sydney, this co-ordinating body will work with governments, companies and development banks to help the G20 achieve a goal of increasing investment in infrastructure.

It will have an initial four-year mandate. Infrastructure needs in areas such as electricity networks, roads, rail and ports are particularly acute in developing countries. In Asia alone, the Asian Development Bank estimates developing countries will need to invest $8 trillion in infrastructure from 2010 to 2020 just to keep their economies moving forward.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Workin' 9-5? Paid to play, what a way to make a livin'

From nine to five, seven days a week, Robert Schill plays video games while sitting on a plush, brown sofa in central Florida.

Hundreds, sometimes thousands, of people watch. His web channel has more than 35 million hits in one year.

And Schill gets paid for it.

He's a shift worker, a labourer in a brave and strange new economy that rewards a Big Brother-like existence combined with entrepreneurial pluck.

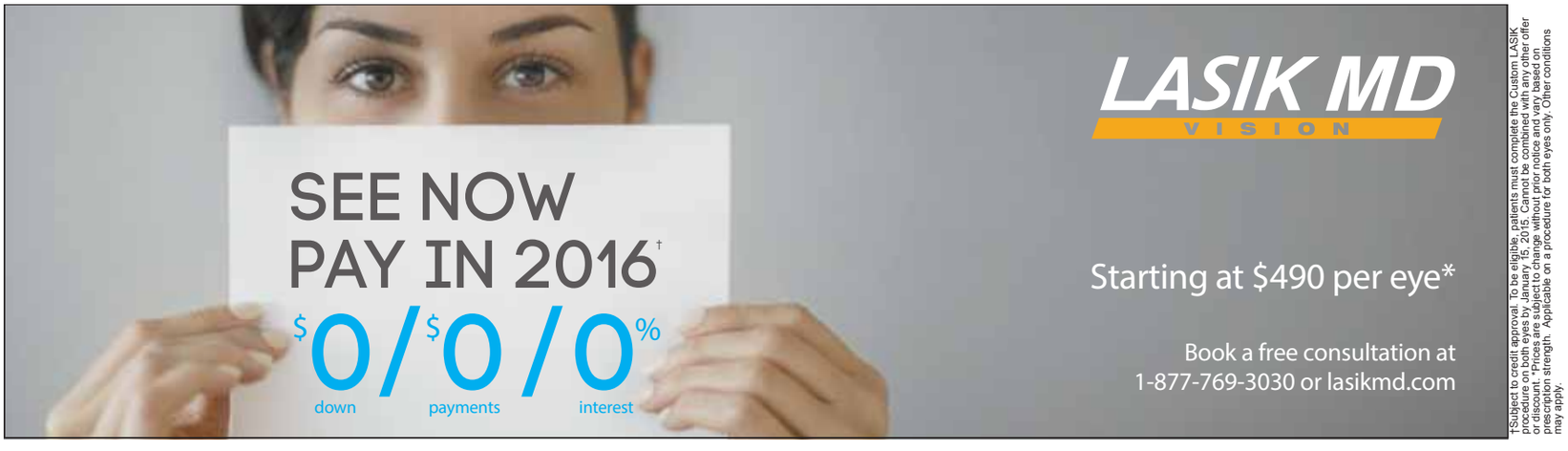
Schill's not alone in this venture, not even in his own home. When the 26-year-old ginger-haired Schill finishes his shift, he unplugs his game controller and his roommate, 29-year-old Adam Young, sinks into the sofa and plays until 1 a.m. Then a third roommate, Brett Borden, 26, clocks in for his eight-hour shift.

They are the stars of StreamerHouse. They broadcast via Twitch.tv, an online network that attracts tens of millions of visitors, most of whom watch footage of other people playing video games.

StreamerHouse is set in a 1920s-era Mediterranean-revival home graced with 20 cameras, at least 15 computer screens and two bulldogs (Mister Pig and Baby Pig). It's part reality TV, part talk radio and part performance art. The trio play games, chat with fans and narrate their daily lives into an expensive microphone setup.

They make money from a cut of Twitch advertising, subscriptions, video game sales and from fan donations.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS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OTTAWA ECONOMICS: RATS, RAIL AND RETAIL

URBAN COMPASS

Steve Collins
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I spotted an unusual specimen of urban wildlife Saturday night: a rat at the under-construction Rideau bus stop. He was just a little guy, darting out from beneath a trash receptacle and back under cover again when people coming down the busy sidewalk were startled, or even screamed. I watched their reactions for a while there waiting for the bus.

My own initial reaction as the rodent and I eyeballed each other was mild disbelief and curiosity. Rats are a fairly rare sight out in the open here. I'd also just been reading that the construction of the LRT tunnel and other major projects — such as the Rideau Centre expansion, I suppose — have been displacing local rats from their subterranean haunts and driving them off in search of new digs.

Such infrastructure projects may be unpopular with our bucktoothed and stigmatized wee neighbours, but at Wednesday's Economic outlook luncheon, Mayor Jim Watson cited initiatives such as these, new hires at high-tech companies Cisco and Huawei, and retail expansion like the new Tanger Outlets in Kanata as hallmarks of "an exciting time to live, work and invest in the nation's capital."

It seemed to be a week to think of our city as an economic being. Last Monday, Statistics Canada released estimates of the gross domestic product (GDP) of Canadian cities.

The most obvious conclusion to be drawn from the analysis is that cities are where the action is, with about half of the nation's GDP produced in the six metropolitan areas with populations of over a million: Toronto, Montreal, Vancouver, Calgary, Edmonton, and Ottawa–Gatineau.

Toronto, at $274 billion, is the gorilla in the room, accounting for close to 20 per cent of national GDP, though over the 2001-2009 period examined, western cities increased GDP share while eastern ones ceded it.

Ottawa-Gatineau accounted for a little less than five per cent of the national output. The most recent year of the data, 2009, in the thick of the recession, saw our share of GDP rise to 4.6 per cent ($68 billion) from 4.3 per cent ($55 billion) in 2005.

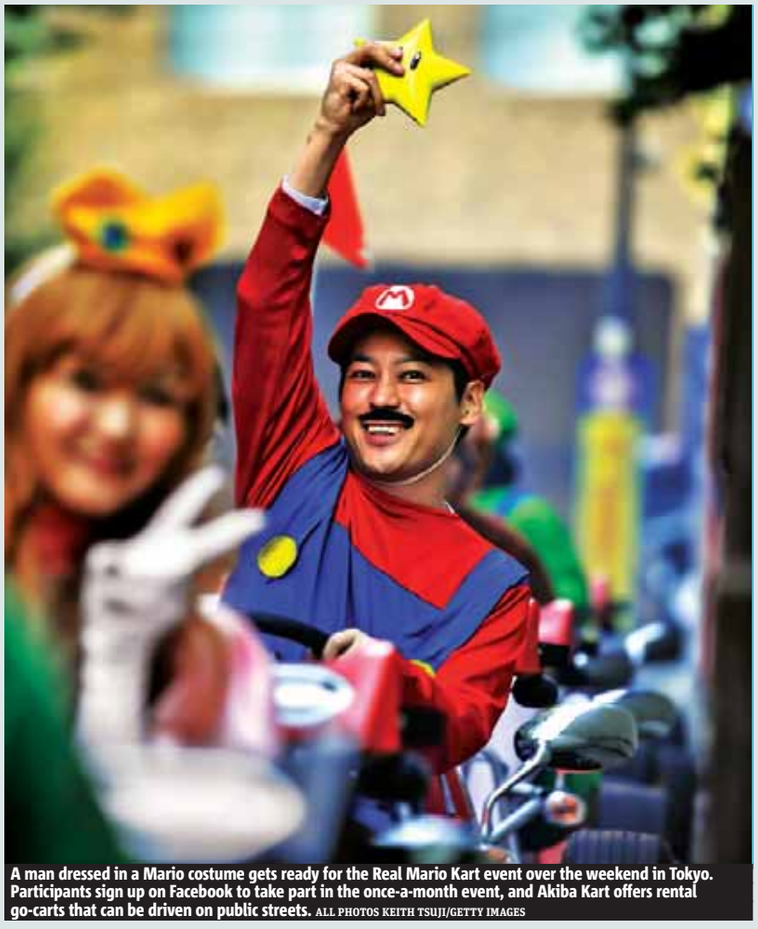
Some observers cited our lack of reliance on manufacturing (only 15 per cent of local economic output is from production of goods) and the insulating effect of the public sector as factors in the capital region's softer landing.

It has only been in the years since then that the city has felt the bite of government job cuts: an overall rise in unemployment, business closures and declining transit ridership.

Mayor Watson, in his economic address, bet the city's future on supporting new, small and medium-sized businesses, thereby reducing the city's dependence on the federal government, or as he put it, "branching out from the shadow of the Peace Tower."

In the very same speech, though, Watson illustrated just how long that shadow can be, as he touted the potential of our third-biggest industry: tourism. But how many tourists would Ottawa attract if it weren't the nation's capital? We're still a long way from shedding that "government town" identity.

Kawaii Mario Kart



A man dressed in a Mario costume gets ready for the Real Mario Kart event over the weekend in Tokyo. Participants sign up on Facebook to take part in the once-a-month event, and Akiba Kart offers rental go-carts that can be driven on public streets. ALL PHOTOS KEITH TSUJI/GETTY IMAGES

Japanese cosplayers bring racing game to busy Tokyo streets

Are you a big fan of Nintendo's Mario Kart video games on the Wii and 3DS? Well, you might be interested to watch these Japanese cosplayers bring Mario Kart characters to life on the roads of Tokyo.

The real-life Mario Kart drivers have been seen driving through the Tokyo districts of Shibuya and Harajuku, and are always happy to pose for photos and ham it up for the cameras when they stop at traffic junctions. IBTIMES.CO.UK

Wanna get in on the fun?

Interested parties can rent a go-kart for themselves in Tokyo.

- The go-karts are street legal and travel at a maximum speed of 55 km/h.

MetroTube

Turkey gets the herky jerky

ANDREW FIFIELD
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Sure, at first this was amusing: A hapless turkey suitor, working his best plumage game, only to be foiled by a lady bird's quick-thinking rejection technique. But it didn't take long before that laughter turned to tears, because this bird's face-planting failure looks all too familiar. (YouTube)

GETTY IMAGES

Twitter

@metropicks asked: In the latest twist, the big cat on the loose in Paris is not a tiger after all, but hundreds of police officers are still on the case. What should the super-cool official operation name be?

@speirsr: "What should the super-cool official operation name be?" Operation Tigger Bounceth

@_LeftOne: Spy of the Tiger?

@SteveShrout: Operation Furball. Catnip Caper. Operation Freaky Feline. Operation Here Kitty Kitty Kitty. (The last is my fav)

metro AR SEE THE NEWS COME ALIVE

In this issue, you can find AR enhancements on page 22 in Sports.

To see these pages spring to life, download or update the Metro News app and follow these three easy steps:

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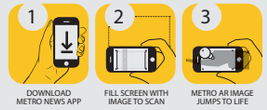

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Ebooks

Kitten Clone

By. Douglas Coupland

Kindle/iBooks/Kobo

Inspired by the way Internet searches can unfold like stories, Coupland uses an anecdote about kittens to delve into the Internet's origins through a mysterious, hidden company that is the keystone of our connected world. He plays with font sizes, uses html codes, and even holds conversations with ghosts past and future for this strangely engrossing, but enlightening, tech tale.
KRIS ABEL

Music

30th-anniversary Band Aid single helps Ebola fight

Bob Geldof, One Direction, Bono and about 30 other stars gathered in a studio in London on Saturday to record a 30th-anniversary version of the Band Aid charity single, to raise money to fight Ebola.

Led Zeppelin's Robert Plant, Coldplay's Chris Martin and Sinead O'Connor were also among the rockers brought together by Geldof to sing the fourth version of Do They Know It's Christmas?

The single aired last night for the first time on Britain's X Factor TV show, and has been officially released today for digital download.

"All pop singers can do is sing, write songs, give up whatever they're doing," Geldof told reporters and fans outside the Sarm Studios in Notting Hill.

The rocker-turned-activist said he had been spurred into action not out of nostalgia, but by a call from the United Nations, concerned about not having the necessary funds to combat the epidemic in west Africa. The virus has claimed more than 5,000 lives, almost all in Liberia, Guinea and Sierra Leone. **AFP**

Sam Smith's brave songs help cure his loneliness

Music. Breakthrough artist bares his soul in deep, honest lyrics that he believes resonate with his fans

If you go to a Sam Smith concert, you'll probably hear his stories of unrequited love and how he's never been in a relationship.

But he says that void has been slowly filled — partly thanks to meeting men and going on dates — but mainly because of his devoted fans, who have helped him top the charts with his album, push out millions of singles and sell out stadiums like Madison Square Garden.

"I'm going on dates, here and there, meeting people," Smith said in a recent interview. "I'm not lonely anymore because of that, but obviously I would like someone next to me while I sleep.

"But I'm working on that," he added with a laugh.

Smith is the year's breakthrough act, thanks to his booming, soulful voice, playful demeanour and deep, honest lyrics that help break up the monotonous, dance-heavy sound on pop radio.

In the Lonely Hour, his debut album released in June, has sold close to 773,000 copies. His single Stay With Me peaked at No. 2 on the Billboard Hot 100 chart and sold more than three million tracks. And other songs have built on his buzz, from another Top-10 hit and multi-platinum success, Latch, with Disclosure, to the upbeat La La La, with Naughty Boy, to Smith's newest single, I'm Not the Only One, which jumped to No. 11.

Sam Smith has sold millions of copies of his soulful songs. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

The 22-year-old has several big-name fans, from Beyoncé to Mary J. Blige, with whom he's recorded. And he's been getting calls to collaborate with others.

"I remember being ecstatic for having 200 Facebook likes. ... Now, I take that completely for granted, now that I have like a million. But I'm now thinking, 'I really would like two million.'"

The Lonely Hour features lyrics that are brave and straightforward — Smith tells one man to leave his lover for him on one song, and on another he's open about being in love with someone who doesn't feel the same.

"When I'm speaking about my insecurities ... that's when my music is the best. And that doesn't happen every day, so this writing process was quite dramatic, and because I was trying to get these songs that were honest and brutal and real," said Smith, who co-wrote each song. "I'm not a naturally sad person, so I was writing for a year and I wasn't sad every single day for a year, so that was tough."

He believes his fans are resonating with his honesty.

"The whole world knows my business now. I've got nothing else to hide ... and I think that people are respecting that."

Smith said fans have told him intense stories about connecting to his music. He's also a voice for young gay men and women who look up to him.

"It's so, so deeply important to me to be a spokesperson ... but not just for gay people — for straight people, for lesbians, transsexuals, anyone in the world. I want my music to relate to absolutely everyone."
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Quoted

"The whole world knows my business now. I've got nothing else to hide ... and I think that people are respecting that."
Sam Smith, singer/songwriter

Movies. Jennifer Aniston's sex-crazed dentist role is even raunchier in 'bad dirty' Horrible Bosses sequel

Jennifer Aniston said she pushed her sex-crazed dentist character as far as she could in Horrible Bosses 2, but she's willing to try again in a third instalment.

Asked if another sequel is in the works, she replied, "I don't know. It's up to you all."

Horrible Bosses 2, the followup to the 2011 hit, opens Nov. 24. It stars Jason Bateman, Jason Sudeikis and Charlie Day as amateur entrepreneurs who get caught up in a kidnapping scheme when their business deal with a conniving investor, played by Christolph Waltz, goes awry.

The actors improvised a lot during filming, Aniston said in a recent interview, until it became a gross-out contest between the stars.

"This one went into a territory that I think just wasn't even funny," she said. "I couldn't even make it dirty funny. It was just bad dirty."

When it came to creating her character, Aniston said she told the filmmakers: "Just go as far as you can until someone actually gets sick from it."

She feels there's more to do be done with Dr. Julia Harris. "She's hardly tapped out. We all were a bit sad when this movie came to an end because I, for one, felt it was too soon to end Julia's party."

As the 45-year-old promotes her new comedy, she's also getting potential awards attention for her dramatic turn in Cake, which is open now in limited release. She's not ruling out a return to TV, either, although she didn't hint at any specific plans.

"I've never said never to coming back to television," the Friends star said. "Television is pretty fantastic these days." **THE ASSOCIATED PRESS**

Jennifer Aniston THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

SCENE

Taylor Swift ALL PHOTOS: GETTY IMAGES

Taylor's making Swift moves on Chris Martin

All of the year's gossip stories appear to be converging — and just in time for the holidays! Think of it as the Celebrity Singularity. The latest evidence? This Star magazine story that Taylor Swift — despite recent protestations that she's done dating for a while — has set her sights on Coldplay frontman and Gwyneth Paltrow ex Chris Martin, despite his on-again, off-again relationship with Jennifer Lawrence. Deep breaths, everybody. "Taylor would love to make Chris her new boyfriend," a source tells the magazine. "She's taking advantage of how Jen's and Chris' busy schedules are keeping them apart. She can sense that their relationship is on shaky ground, so she's moving in — fast." All we need is a tag-team response from Blake Lively and Martha Stewart, and we're set. In all seriousness, though, can someone explain to me why Chris Martin is suddenly the hottest thing in Hollywood since sliced Clooney? I'm mystified.

Alfonso Ribeiro

No Fresh dance moves for Alfonso Ribeiro

Alfonso Ribeiro has been the biggest hit of this season's Dancing with the Stars, but is the show going to have to make do without him? E! News confirms that the former Fresh Prince of Bel Air star suffered another injury during rehearsals last week, and it's still unclear if he'll be performing Monday night — or continuing with the competition at all. Ribeiro reportedly injured his back last week while trying to compensate for an earlier groin injury. "I'm doing a lot of treatment every week," he said after last week's show. "I'm doing everything I can just to maintain and try to keep going. It's a lot of work and it's tiresome, but as long as we keep going, I'm OK."

METRO DISH

OUR TAKE ON THE WORLD OF CELEBRITIES

The Word

Usher's latest track has a touch of honey sweetness

STARGAZING
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scene@metronews.ca

A new track by Usher is available only in boxes of Honey Nut Cheerios sold at Walmart. It's all part of a new trend of making it as difficult as humanly possible to obtain a song by your favourite artist. Check inside select packages of Radio Shack men's socks for fresh Coldplay tunes.

Andy Dick is arrested for stealing some random guy's necklace and then making his getaway on a bicycle. Too bad for you, Justin Bieber. Whatever stupid criminal thing you'll think up next, it will still be smarter than that.

Mick Hucknall of Simply Red says it's "probably" true that he slept with more than 1,000 women back when he was a big deal. In unrelated news, more than 1,000 women all over the world unconsciously made a yuck face.

Josh Hutcherson says he's "curious" how human flesh tastes, "like you want to know what a pigeon tastes like, you know." "I know no such thing," said his Hunger Games co-star Donald "Squab" Sutherland.

Chad Kroeger says that we should all just stop speculating about the condition of his and Avril Lavigne's marriage. So, it's totally over, then? Got it.

Jennifer Lawrence calls co-stars Josh Hutcherson and Liam Hemsworth "my angels" and "my kittens." "Well," she continues, "I really don't care for Josh, but it's best to say nice, soothing things whenever he looks hungry."

Redfoo claims his new song, with the lyrics, "I said jump on the pole; I didn't need your opinion," isn't misogynistic while Nicki Minaj, whose latest video contains Nazi imagery and (for bonus points) was released on the anniversary of Kristallnacht, says she doesn't condone Nazi imagery. Congratulations, Eminem, for picking the right week to rap you'd "punch Lana Del Ray in the face twice like Ray Rice."

Jennifer Aniston says that she and love biscuit Justin Theroux "can entertain ourselves and talk about endless things." Endless things they like to talk about 1) Possibilities. 2) Universes. 3) Summer. 4) Breadsticks.

Kelly and Ozzy Osbourne

Osbournes are making a comeback, but will they break the Internet?

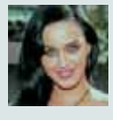
The Osbournes may be coming back to TV nearly 10 years after going off the air, and in proper fashion — since they're older and all — they'll be jumping from MTV to VH1, according to the Hollywood Reporter. Of course, the reality TV landscape was a lot different a decade ago, and I'm just worried Ozzy, Sharon, Kelly and Jack are not prepared to do what it takes to stand out these days. Like have they decided which one will get oiled up and try to break the Internet? Please say it's not Ozzy.

Bynes burns bridges with Paris Hilton

First her parents, now Paris Hilton — Amanda Bynes appears to be fighting left and right. The troubled former Nickelodeon star reportedly had a run-in with Hilton and pal Brandon Davis at an L.A. nightclub recently, according to Page Six. "Amanda tried to sit at Paris and Brandon's table, and they were not happy about it," a source says. "There was a scene, and words were exchanged before they kicked her out of their area." Oh, words were exchanged? My, I do hope no pearls were clutched as well.

Amanda Bynes

Twitter



@katyperry
Remember a time when we didn't have cell phones but had personal space? Now if you don't reply or aren't constantly avail people take it personally. Wish there was a global cell sabbath every week so we could all breathe again...

@KellyOsbourne
I have no words to express how much a spider bite to the face hurts! Plus a large injection in my jaw... today sucked balls!

@BetteMidler
For every article you read about Robert Pattinson's new haircut, you should be required to read at least two about war crimes in Syria.

Make a list and check it twice to stick to your holiday budget

Christmas shopping. Sit down and draw up a plan to avoid those impulse purchases that will bust the bank

GAIL VAZ-OXLADE
Gail blogs daily at gailvazoxlade.com

Before heading out, examine why you are buying gifts for certain people on your list. ISTOCK

As we round the corner into December, holiday shopping is ramping up and we're all under the gun to balance a challenging year with a cheerful holiday season.

Did you learn your lesson last year and decide to set aside some money every month so you wouldn't end up putting your holiday on credit? Did you plan ahead, particularly for big purchases, and take advantage of the stuff that went on sale well ahead of the Christmas rush? Good for you.

Don't want to blow your brains out on gift-giving this holiday season? Pretend you are Santa: make a list and check it twice. Who doesn't need to be on there? To whom can you give a token gift to commemorate the season? How much are you going to spend on each person?

Even if you're just running out for eggnog or wrapping paper, without a list you'll fall victim to a whole bunch of "Jeez, I forgot I also need …" and bring back a receipt you'll kick yourself for later. Making a list also helps you plan how you'll use those coupons you've got stashed in your wallet.

Before tossing anything into your shopping cart, ask yourself why you are buying it. Are you just fulfilling your duty to give a gift? Are you showing off? Are you trying to keep up? Or are you giving something you can afford that your friend, sister, son or partner will truly enjoy receiving? If they really love you, your mom, brother or BFF aren't going to be happier that you put yourself in financial stress instead of giving them something that might be slightly less and within your means. If they are judging you on your pressie, then they don't really love you and you shouldn't be buying them *anything*.

Don't self-gift while you're shopping. The one-for-me-one-for-you approach to holiday shopping is just an excuse to be self-indulgent. More than three-quarters of us buy something for ourselves while shopping for others.

If you see something you want to add to your list, do so, but make sure you wait at least 48 hours before you buy it. Impulse shopping is at its peak during the Holiday Rush and it can be a budget killer.

Go home, check online for where else the item may be on sale, and make sure you're making a thoughtful decision.

Resist the urge to open up all those store credit cards you'll be offered. It's tempting to get that 10 per cent off your purchase for the day, I know, but think for a minute: stores must be making a lot of money on interest and late fees in order to offer you that special deal. And if you're the sucker who ends up carrying a balance, you'll spend far more in interest than you saved on purchases. And, yes, opening and closing store cards can mess with your credit score.

Skip the extended warranties. Most are a huge rip-off, so if you're even considering it, calculate the cost as a percentage of the item you are buying. Remember, manufacturers' warranties protect you, usually for up to a year, against any defect. And if you shop with the right credit card, your warranty can be extended to up to two years. Of the dozens and dozens of extended warranties I've been offered in my shopping life, there's only one that I would have made money on!

If you're a smart coupon shopper, you probably check online to see if there are any new offers before you hit the malls. But have you ever thought about setting up a "sale mail" email account when stores ask you for your email so you can get the coupons, but not be inundated with junk in your regular email?

As you grab your keys, grab a sandwich and a drink, too. If you're going to be out shopping for a while, pack a healthy snack and some water. Hunger and thirst have a way of muddling your thinking. Keep your energy up so your brain (and self-control) can work properly.

If you can't find the perfect gift for someone on your list, consider a gift of cash. While gift cards may be more "holiday friendly," I only choose gift cards over cash when I want to be sure the body buys something I intended, as oppose to just incorporating the money into the cash flow for household bills. Yes, there are still selfless people who don't want to spend a cent on themselves.

The very best gifts don't cost a penny. Offer up your time babysitting, cooking meals, house cleaning, massaging, sewing, knitting, transporting, or whatever else you're good at.

Quoted

"Resist the urge to open up all those store credit cards you'll be offered."

Health. The stench of rotten eggs and fish could help you quit smoking

Olfactory conditioning during sleep could lead to behaviour change, according to a new study from the Weizmann Institute of Science in Israel that says exposing sleeping smokers to the stench of rotten eggs blended with that of cigarette smoke could lead them to quit.

Study author Dr. Anat Arzi says the researchers chose olfactory conditioning because it's the only sensory stimulus that doesn't wake individuals from sleep.

Working with a group of 66 smokers looking to quit, a group was selected to spend the night in the sleep lab, where they were observed and periodically exposed to pairs of odours: either cigarette smoke and rotten eggs or cigarette smoke and fish.

In the morning, they had no recollection of the foul odours, but they reported smoking less throughout the week that followed.

Another group was exposed to the foul odours while awake, but they didn't report smoking less the following week.

A third group was exposed to the two foul odours of rotten eggs and fish separately and to cigarette smoke separately and they didn't report smoking less either.

The paper was published in the Journal of Neuroscience.

AFP

A study published in the Journal of Neuroscience found that exposing smokers to bad smells while they slept could help them reduce smoking. AFP

Money 101. Two couples, one year to make them richer

Overcoming financial obstacles

For 11 months, I have coached two Canadian couples to overcome their money fears. The result of taking control of their respective financial futures has been a collective net worth improvement of more than $75,000. As we march towards the end of the year, we will lay out a five-year plan that will help each couple achieve their long-term financial goals. But first, we will examine obstacles that each couple faces in making their long-term plan a reality. – *Lesley-Anne Scorgie*

Anne-Marie and Peter will have to decide whether to buy a first home or have a second child. SHUTTERSTOCK

Carolina is hoping to go back to work part time when her youngest daughter is old enough for preschool. SHUTTERSTOCK

Anne-Marie and Peter

There are three major obstacles Anne-Marie and Peter face in making their long-term financial plans of owning a home and building up retirement savings:

- Peter's low income
- The high costs of child care
- The second child versus first home dilemma

Over the past year, Peter has been wrestling with the financial realities of having a career he loves in sports editing that pays much lower than a similar role in a large corporation.

His excellent work ethic and performance have helped him advance in title and work quality, but not in salary. After much lobbying by Peter and great deliberation by his employer, he secured a raise last month, equating to a 20 per cent salary increase.

Despite this excellent news, Peter still remains underpaid for his work relative to the market. So he will continue to monitor his options in 2015.

The second obstacle is how best to afford child care when Anne-Marie returns to work in the spring. The current quotes range from $1,750 to $2,000 per month until their daughter is 18 months old, at which point the child care fees drop approximately 30 per cent.

Anne-Marie and Peter recap

- Location: Toronto
- Ages: 37 and 33
- Occupations: Broadcasting and sports editing
- Total household income: $120,000
- Life stage: First child arrived in May
- Financial savvy: Medium to high — they use budgets, have retirement savings, and are committed to paying off debt
- Rent or own: Rent
- Top goals for 2014: Pay off debt, start an RESP, and begin saving a down payment
- Current net worth: $110,000
- Homework from last month: Prepare a high-level five-year budget

Though the couple became familiar with these costs when they were planning their first child, they are still concerned about the impact these costs will have to their budget and overall lifestyle. They may have to consider serious cuts to their social spending, which is $400 per month.

The third and most significant obstacle is the dilemma of having a second child versus buying their first home. They have tremendous anxiety around affording both, yet many families have gone this route before them and managed with much less.

The facts are that raising a family isn't cheap and neither is buying a home in Toronto. To have both will require a complete elimination of consumer debt (of which the couple is nearly there), a reduction in social and travel spending, and, most certainly, a higher-paying job for Peter.

Homework

For our last month together, Anne-Marie and Peter will work through a detailed 2015 budget that incorporates child care costs and prioritizes their down payment savings.

THE NAMES OF BOTH COUPLES HAVE BEEN CHANGED TO PROTECT THEIR PRIVACY.

Carolina and Jose

Last month Carolina and Jose finally crossed the threshold into positive net worth. And the cherry on top of this good news was Jose's positive performance review, which landed him a five per cent raise to his annual income.

There is one primary obstacle the couple faces when working towards their long-term financial goals of starting a retirement savings program, eliminating their debt and contributing to RESPs for their three daughters — low household income.

Carolina and Jose recognize that just getting by with their current income is far from desirable.

Though they live an exceptionally frugal life, raising three children and paying a mortgage leaves little for other important financial priorities like saving for retirement, reducing their student loans, and paying for their term-life insurance policy.

Jose's recent raise will certainly help their monthly cash flow, but it doesn't fundamentally change their ability to make serious progress on their savings.

What would make a huge difference to their monthly cash flow is if Carolina went back to work part time in 15 months, when their youngest daughter is old enough for junior preschool.

They have worked out the math and if Carolina could net $1,000 per month after taxes, that would enable the couple to eliminate their remaining student debt in two years, kick-start RESPs for their daughters, while being able to contribute a few hundred dollars each month into their RRSPs.

When combined with Jose's ambitious plans to continue climbing the corporate ladder as a safety co-ordinator, they may eventually be able to afford a larger home for their growing family and higher quality activities and training for their children.

The changes Carolina and Jose envision for their income won't happen overnight, so they will slowly chip away at these major goals, one dollar at a time.

Carolina and Jose recap

- Location: Calgary
- Ages: 33 and 32
- Occupations: Stay-at-home mom and roofing
- Total household income: $65,000
- Life stage: Three daughters, aged five, three and one
- Financial savvy: Medium — they have established a budget, purchased a home, are frugal, and have no retirement savings
- Rent or own: Own
- Top goals for 2014: Pay off debt, buy a house, and visit family
- Current net worth: $1,000
- Homework from last month: Building a five-year budget around their five-year goals

Homework

For this month, Carolina and Jose's homework is to begin contributing $25 per month to their RRSPs and finalize the details of their will and term-life insurance policy.

LESLEY-ANNE SCORGIE IS A COLUMNIST WITH METRO, FINANCIAL COACH AND BESTSELLING AUTHOR OF WELL-HEELED.

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Should I set down my studies for a year and get to know the globe?

Education. Is a 'gap year' after high school the right choice for you?

LAKSHMI GANDHI
Metro in New York City

Elizabeth Campbell decided to spend a year in Spain learning Spanish before heading to post-secondary school. CONTRIBUTED

It's a familiar script that millions of students follow each year: Graduate high school and then immediately start post-secondary.

But more and more students are embracing the "gap year" — a year of volunteering and working before heading to campus.

"In the beginning of senior year I was really stressed out with homework and extracurricular activities and everything that goes along with it in high school," says Elizabeth Campbell, a 19-year-old from Little Rock, Ark. "And I decided, 'Hey, maybe I want to take some time off and travel and learn another language.'"

Campbell decided to defer her admission to Furman University for a year and moved to Seville, Spain, as part of a gap year program with the Council on International Educational Exchange.

"I lived with a host family and went to an intensive language study," explains Campbell, who also spent a significant amount of time volunteering as an English tutor at two local schools, one of which served the children of Ecuadorian immigrants. She says that in many ways, her year away gave her a leg up when it came time to start college

"It definitely made me a more open-minded person," she says. "I was just so stressed out senior year (of high school), and the gap year really gave me a break from that academic pressure and that pressure to succeed and make really great grades. I definitely think that I'm really fresh for college now."

Giving the brain a little break

"I was just so stressed out senior year (of high school), and the gap year really gave me a break from that academic pressure and that pressure to succeed and make really great grades. I definitely think that I'm really fresh for college now."
Elizabeth Campbell

In many ways, Campbell's story is typical of students who take gap years, says Jay Bacrania, the CEO of Signet Education in Cambridge, Massachusetts. Bacrania and his colleague Sheila Akbar often help plan gap years for the students they work with, which they stress isn't a year-long vacation.

"They are going to be challenged," he says, adding that planning is key. "It's not really a way to disguise a year off." Students weighing whether to take a gap year should ask themselves these questions:

What do you want to accomplish?
"Think about what your goals are," advises Bacrania. "Is there a project you want to work on?" He suggests that high school seniors talk with their families or other mentors about things they'd like to achieve during the year and to come up with a realistic plan reach those goals.

Are you taking time off for the right reasons?
Sometimes students who didn't get into their dream college or university think that a gap year can help bolster their college applications and get them to the next level.

"We don't encourage that," says Bacrania, noting that some students flirt with the idea of the gap year quite late into their senior years when they feel like they aren't getting into the schools they want.

Both Akbar and Bacrania say they usually suggest that students complete the college application process and defer admission for a year.

'Round the planet plan

Thinking of taking a gap year? Ask yourself how much structure you need.

- Some students want to focus on developing a skill or learning a language during their gap years. Sheila Akbar recalls working on a plan for a student who was interested in exploring a career in fashion. "We researched summer programs and said, 'These are the pros and these are the cons.'"

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They're giving me the cold shoulder

OFFICE SPACE
Eleni Deacon
life@metronews.ca

Feeling a little achoo-stricized? Let them know your sniffly symptoms are end-of-a-cold in nature and that you will do your best to keep your coughs contained. ISTOCK

Dear Metro,

I'm recovering from a bad cold, and while I feel healthy enough to return to work, I still have a lingering cough and runny nose. I can tell some of my co-workers are grossed out and/or scared of catching something from me. I don't want to fall further behind at my job — but I also don't want to ick people out. What can I do?

— Pass Me a Kleenex

Dear PMAK,

I'm no doctor, but it sounds like your colleagues might be coming down with a case of Acute Prissy Fear-of-Phlegmitis. It's November. The days are short. Our immune systems are under siege. There are airborne viruses everywhere. Getting sick is just one of the hazards of going to work — or out in the world at large.

Still, be courteous about your mucus. Frequent handwashing, prompt nose-blowing, and into-your-sleeve sneezing are all chivalries your office snot snobs will appreciate. If your cough is aggressively fitful, hack it out in the bathroom rather than the break room. You can also remove yourself — and your stuffed-up sinuses — from the germaphobic stares of others. On particularly drippy mornings, try working from home or in a more isolated part of your company's space.

And unless you've just Purelled, put yourself on hiatus from handshakes, high fives, and all other forms of professional affection.

Dear Metro,

I get to work at 9 a.m. each morning, and I want to leave on time at 5 p.m. But all my co-workers linger at their desks until about 5:30. I don't have any reason to stay late, but I'm concerned it will look bad if I ditch first every day. How can I get out of there without seeming like a slacker?

— Workin' 9 to not-5:30

Dear W9TN530,

Are you a slacker?

If you're arriving at on-the-dot 9 and completing your tasks on time, there's no obligation to futz in your seat for the sake of appearances. But if your hasty departure reflects a half-baked work ethic, you may want to align your schedule to that of your colleagues.

The real issue isn't what time you leave, but what you make of the time you spend there.

Your office may have a culture of late-stayers, but there's no legal basis for unpaid overtime.

Rather than concerning yourself with seeming like a slacker, concern yourself with becoming a reliable employee who consistently performs high-quality work. Then no one will care if you loiter until 6 or occasionally sneak out at 4.

ELENI DEACON IS A TORONTO-BASED WRITER WHO HAS SEEN IT ALL AS AN EAGER EMPLOYEE OF BIG OFFICES, SMALL OFFICES, HOME OFFICES AND ONE ITALIAN RESTAURANT.

An illuminated existence

Let the sunshine in for better health, says study

A study from Northwestern Medicine and the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign indicates that all-day exposure to natural light, even by means of a window, leads to longer sleep duration at night, as well as increased physical activity and quality of life.

"There is increasing evidence that exposure to light, during the day, particularly in the morning, is beneficial to your health via its effects on mood, alertness and metabolism," says senior study author Phyllis Zee, M.D., a Northwestern Medicine neurologist and sleep specialist.

The study was conducted on office workers, and windows in the workplace could mean up to 173 percent more white light exposure during the day and an average of 46 minutes more sleep at night, researchers concluded.

They also noted a trend of workers with more light exposure being more physically active than their counterparts.

In the study, researchers surveyed 49 day-shift office workers, of which 27 worked in windowless offices and 22 had windows in their offices.

Quality of life and everything health-related was self-reported, whereas sleep was assessed by means of the Pittsburgh Sleep Quality Index (PSQI).

A subset of 21 participants was surveyed for light exposure, activity and sleep by means of actigraphy. Ten of these participants worked in windowless environments and 11 hailed from workplaces with windows.

AFP

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It's a little bit pasta, a little bit soup and a whole lot of warmth

Soup Week. We've got you covered for creative slurping ideas, starting with Meatball and Small Shell Pasta Soup

ROSE REISMAN
For more, visit rosereisman.com or follow her on twitter @rosereisman

A mini meatball and shell pasta soup is a sure winner for the entire family.

It's a complete one-dish lunch or dinner consisting of meat, vegetables and pasta. With this hearty soup, you have a nutritious and well-balanced meal with protein, vegetables and grains.

Feel free to substitute ground chicken or turkey for the beef but increase the bread crumbs to four tablespoons. For extra fibre, use a whole wheat pasta.

Once the soup is made, you'll notice that the pasta swells and there may not be enough soup. Just add another cup of stock when reheating.

By leaving out the pasta, you can make the soup up to two days in advance. When reheating just add the pasta and more stock if necessary.

This recipe serves six. ROSE REISMAN

Directions

1. Preheat the oven to 425 F. Line a baking sheet with foil sprayed with vegetable oil.

2. To make the meatballs: Combine the ground beef, bread crumbs, barbecue sauce, egg, garlic, basil and 2 tbsp of the Parmesan cheese. Form into 1-inch meatballs (you should have enough for about 24 meatballs). Place on baking sheet and cook for 10 minutes, turning after 6 minutes.

3. To make the soup: While meatballs are cooking, lightly coat a large nonstick pot with cooking spray. Add the oil and set over medium heat. Add the onion and garlic and sauté for 5 minutes or until just softened and browned. Stir in the green pepper and carrots and cook for 3 minutes. Stir in the stock, tomato sauce, tomato paste, chili powder and meatballs. Bring to a boil, then reduce the heat to low and simmer, covered, for 10 minutes.

4. Stir in the pasta and allow to simmer for 5 minutes or until the pasta is tender. Serve the soup in bowls, and garnish it with Parmesan cheese.

Ingredients

Meatballs
- 6 oz lean ground beef
- 3 tbsp seasoned dry bread crumbs
- 2 tbsp barbecue sauce
- 1 egg
- 1 tsp finely chopped garlic
- 1/2 tsp dried basil
- 2 tbsp Parmesan cheese

Soup
- 2 tsp vegetable oil
- 1 cup chopped onion
- 1 1/2 tsp finely chopped garlic
- 1/2 cup chopped green bell pepper
- 1/2 cup finely chopped carrots
- 4 cups low-sodium beef (or chicken) stock
- 1 3/4 cups homemade or store-bought tomato sauce
- 2 tbsp tomato paste
- 1 tsp chili powder
- 1/3 cup small shell pasta
- 1/4 cup grated Parmesan cheese

Nutritional information

Per serving

- **Calories.** 187
- **Carbohydrates.** 21 g
- **Fibre.** 3 g
- **Protein.** 14 g
- **Total fat.** 6.3 g
- **Saturated fat.** 1.7 g
- **Cholesterol.** 58 mg
- **Sodium.** 568 mg

Add crispy crunch to kale

If raw kale doesn't do it for you, try baked and crispy Kale Parmesan Chips. They're easy to make, incredibly healthy and so delicious!

Baking the chips also retains all the nutritional benefits, making them a great low-calorie snack.

Kale is a superfood and contains more than all your daily vitamin A and vitamin C in one cup. Vitamin A is important for eye health and is also a great heart-healthy food.

The key to keeping them crisp is to not cover the chips after they're baked.

Ingredients

- 1 large bunch green kale
- 2 tbsp olive oil
- 2 tbsp finely grated Parmesan cheese
- Salt and pepper to taste

1. Preheat oven to 350 F.

2. Spray 2 large baking sheets with vegetable oil.

3. Tear kale into bite-size pieces and place in a large bowl with olive oil. "Massage" the leaves for 2 minutes to soften and scatter on trays in a single layer.

4. Bake for 15 minutes or just until crisp. Sprinkle with Parmesan cheese and salt and pepper.

ROSE REISMAN

This recipe serves eight. ROSE REISMAN

Mr. Hockey

Howe's health takes a turn for the worse, son says

Gordie Howe is "not doing well at all" several weeks after suffering a stroke, according to his son Mark.

The Hall-of Famer known as "Mr. Hockey" initially had been improving better than expected, but that changed recently.

"His health has taken a turn for the worse this past week to 10 days and we are doing what we can to help his situation the best that we can," Mark told The Canadian Press. "But he is not doing well at all is the bottom line."

Gordie Howe, 86, had a stroke Oct. 26.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

ATP Finals

Federer concedes title to Djokovic due to injury

Roger Federer pulled out of the ATP Finals less than one hour before his title match on Sunday, handing a third straight title in the event to Novak Djokovic and dealing a potential blow to Switzerland's Davis Cup ambitions.

The 17-time Grand Slam champion said he hurt his back in the nearly three-hour semifinal win over Davis Cup teammate Stan Wawrinka on Saturday.

"I tried everything I could last night, also today: painkillers, treatment, rest, so forth, warm-up, until the very end," Federer said. "But I just can't compete at this level with Novak."

Federer is set to play for Switzerland in the Davis Cup final against France, starting Friday.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Ivanie Blondin

Ottawa skater captures World Cup gold medal

Ottawa's Ivanie Blondin won the women's mass start race Sunday at the ISU World Cup long track speedskating event.

It is the 24-year-old's first individual World Cup gold medal. She also has two silvers and a bronze in mass start and a gold, silver and bronze in team pursuit during her five years on the World Cup long-track circuit. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Alouettes linebacker Bear Woods tackles Lions running back Stefan Logan during the CFL East Division semifinal on Sunday in Montreal.
PAUL CHIASSON/THE CANADIAN PRESS

Alouettes wipe out crossover foe

CFL playoffs. Lions left licking their wounds after getting whipped in East Division semifinal

Montreal Alouettes coach Tom Higgins said this week he was waiting for his offence to explode, and they picked a playoff game to do it.

With third-string running back Brandon Rutley leading the way with 95 yards on 15 carries, the Alouettes piled up 215 rushing yards in a 50-17 trouncing of the B.C. Lions in the CFL East Division semifinal on Sunday afternoon.

"It's a great feeling to be doing this and be in this position," said Rutley, who stepped into the lineup when Tyrell Sutton hurt an ankle in the final regular-season game, a 29-15 loss at Hamilton. "We have so much talent and, when it comes together like this, it's magic out there."

The victory bought Montreal a return ticket to Hamilton to face the Tiger-Cats in the East final next Sunday.

They hope to stay on the roll that started in mid-season, when they bounced back from a 1-7 start to win nine of their next 11 games.

Jonathan Crompton completed 14 of 21 passes for only 155 yards, but they included touchdown tosses to S.J. Green and Duran Carter. The Alouettes tied a team record for rushing TDs in a playoff game with four, as backup quarterback Tanner Marsh ran in twice and Rutley and Chris Rainey each scored one.

Defensive back Jerald Brown also scored on a team-record 103-yard fumble return.

B.C. ended its season with only two wins in its last eight games. Including one-sided losses to Edmonton and Calgary to end the regular season, the Lions were outscored 120-36 in their final three games.

The Lions finished fourth in the West but crossed over because they had a better record than the East's third-place team, the Toronto Argonauts. Montreal is 4-0 all-time against crossover opponents, with three of those wins against the Lions.

B.C. starting quarterback Kevin Glenn went 6-for-18 for only 64 yards with two interceptions before Travis Partridge took over in the third quarter. Star QB Travis Lulay, who missed 20 of the past 21 games, dressed but was not deemed fit enough to get into the game.

"There's no way to explain it," said B.C. coach Mike Benevides, whose team trailed 50-3 before Partridge threw late TD passes to Shawn Gore and Ernest Jackson, mostly against Montreal's second-string defenders.

"The third quarter was disastrous. At halftime, it was a 12-point game. They executed at a high level. They made plays and we didn't make any."

THE CANADIAN PRESS

West semifinal

Esks end Riders' reign as champs

Kendial Lawrence had an 84-yard punt return touchdown and the Eskimos defence recorded five interceptions as Edmonton beat the Saskatchewan Roughriders 18-10 in the CFL's West semifinal on Sunday.

The loss ended any hopes the Roughriders had of defending their Grey Cup championship from last year. The Eskimos meet the Stampeders in the West final next Sunday. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Kendial Lawrence scored a punt-return touchdown in the Eskimos' playoff win over the Riders on Sunday in Edmonton. GETTY IMAGES

4 SPORTS

Chiefs' D holds off Seahawks

Rare clinch. Former division rivals meet up, Charles leads Kansas City to fifth straight win

The old offensive line coach in Andy Reid could appreciate the way the Kansas City Chiefs pried open holes on Sunday for Jamaal Charles to run free against Seattle.

He could appreciate the way their defensive front stepped up, too.

Given a lead thanks largely to the legs of their dazzling running back, the Chiefs held the Seahawks on fourth down three times in the final quarter. The result was a tense 24-20 victory that pushed Kansas City into a first-place tie with the Denver Broncos in the AFC West.

"We're sitting there with three fourth-down plays late in the game," Reid said, "and they stepped up and did a phenomenal job there getting off the field."

On Sunday

Chiefs	Seahawks
24	20

As for Charles, who finished with 159 yards and two touchdowns?

"He's Jamaal Charles," Reid said. "He's a special player."

Russell Wilson threw for 178 yards and two TDs for the Seahawks, and Marshawn Lynch had 124 yards rushing. But Lynch, fresh off a four-touchdown game, was stuffed twice by the Kansas City defence with the outcome hanging in the balance.

The Seahawks' last-chance drive ended when Wilson threw incomplete on fourth-and-18 at their 20-yard line with 1:13 left.

"They had a great defence," Wilson said. "They just made a great play."

The Chiefs' first fourth-down stop came with about six minutes to go. Lynch was tackled after a two-yard gain on third down, and coach Pete Carroll elected to gamble at the Chiefs 2. Wilson saw Doug Baldwin in the corner of the end zone but badly overthrew him.

Seattle (6-4) held to get the ball and appeared to convert a third down with a completion at the Chiefs 35. Reid wisely challenged the spot, though, and replays showed wide receiver Jermaine Kearse was a full yard short. The Seahawks again went for it, and Lynch was stuffed for no gain with less than four minutes to go.

By the time the Seahawks got the ball back one last time, they were pinned so deep in their own territory with such little time on the clock that it hardly mattered. Lynch left without speaking to reporters.

"Every game we've lost this season it seems like it's come down to the last play, whether it's defence or offence," Seattle defensive end Michael Bennett said. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

metro AR Jamaal Charles, of the Kansas City Chiefs, centre, runs the ball against K.J. Wright, of the Seattle Seahawks, right, at Arrowhead Stadium on Sunday in Kansas City, Mo. Scan the photo with your Metro News app to see more action from the NFL's Week 11.
WESLEY HITT/GETTY IMAGES

On leave, Peterson calls NFL process 'arbitrary'

Vikings' Adrian Peterson outside a court in Conroe, Texas, after pleading no contest to misdemeanour reckless assault for hitting his four-year-old son with a wooden switch. BOB LEVEY/GETTY IMAGES

Adrian Peterson's potential return to the Minnesota Vikings is at the heart of a dispute between the NFL and the players' association, and the star running back thinks the league is being unfair.

Peterson criticized the NFL on Sunday over the process of being activated from a special exempt list after he pleaded no contest Nov. 4 to misdemeanour reckless assault in Texas for hitting his four-year-old son with a wooden switch.

The union filed a grievance with the league, demanding Peterson be allowed to rejoin the Vikings until the determination of any punishment under the personal conduct policy. The NFL, however, ruled Peterson must remain on paid leave in the meantime.

Commissioner Roger Goodell has the sole power to remove him from the special exempt list.

"At this point, I've resolved my matter in the criminal court; I've worked to make amends for what I've done; I've missed most of the season, and I stand ready to be candid and forthcoming with Mr. Goodell about what happened," Peterson said in a statement issued by the NFL Players Association.

"However, I will not allow the NFL to impose a new process of discipline on me, ignore the CBA, ignore the deal they agreed to with me, and behave without fairness or accountability. The process they are pushing is arbitrary, inconsistent, and contrary to what they agreed to do, and for those reasons, I never agreed to the hearing." THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

In detail

The NFL offered Peterson the hearing, but it is required only if a player elects to appeal a punishment. In this case, no decision has been made yet on discipline. The NFL's enhanced penalty for players involved in domestic violence, announced by Goodell in August, is a six-game suspension. Peterson's incident with his son occurred in May.

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Euro qualifiers

Hazard stopped by leader Wales

Wales held Belgium to a goalless draw on Sunday to secure its provisional lead at the top of Group B in its European Championship qualifying campaign.

Gareth Bale was the lone threat for the underdogs but could not get past goalkeeper Thibaut Courtois. At the other end, Eden Hazard again failed to provide the decisive thrust for his country, something he so often does for his club Chelsea. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Hiddink goes 'phew'

Latvia absorbs Dutch rage: 6-0

The Netherlands outclassed Latvia in a morale-boosting 6-0 win Sunday that eased pressure on coach Guus Hiddink after four defeats in his first five matches.

Arjen Robben and Klaas-Jan Huntelaar both scored twice while Robin van Persie and Jeffrey Bruma also found the net as the Dutch got their European Championship Group A qualifying campaign back on track. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Arjen Robben takes a shot in the Netherlands 6-0 rout of Latvia on Sunday in Amsterdam. Robben scored twice. VINCENT JANNINK/AFP/GETTY IMAGES

AUGMENTED REALITY

Stuck on 12 Across? Scan this image with your Metro News app for today's crossword and Sudoku answers. It's OK. No one's watching.

metro AR

→ See the full instructions on Metro's Voices page.

Horoscopes by Sally Brompton

♈ Aries
March 21 - April 20
The facts of your situation are not in doubt, but what will you do about them? If your instincts point you in one direction while everyone else says you should do the opposite, trust your gut.

♉ Taurus
April 21 - May 21
If, as the planets suggest, you are getting frustrated at being ignored do something about it. There is no excuse for keeping your thoughts to yourself.

♊ Gemini
May 22 - June 21
What you need to remember over the next few days is that there are many routes to self-discovery, and many routes to fame and fortune too. Find a simple way to combine the two.

♋ Cancer
June 22 - July 23
With both Mercury and Uranus strong in your chart today there will be moments when your ideas and insights are touched by genius. What you discover is meant for sharing.

♌ Leo
July 24 - Aug. 23
Never be afraid of your feelings, even when they are negative in nature. If you are annoyed about something there must be a reason for it.

♍ Virgo
Aug. 24 - Sept. 23
If an amazing idea surfaces in your mind today you must do something with it. Write it down in as much detail as you can straight away.

♎ Libra
Sept. 24 - Oct. 23
Don't listen to those who say you must follow the "official" line on something. Trust your own moral compass.

♏ Scorpio
Oct. 24 - Nov. 22
Your mind is awash with ideas but you seem reluctant to do much with them. Maybe that's because you don't want to begin new projects in a rush of enthusiasm only to lose interest in them later. Take your time.

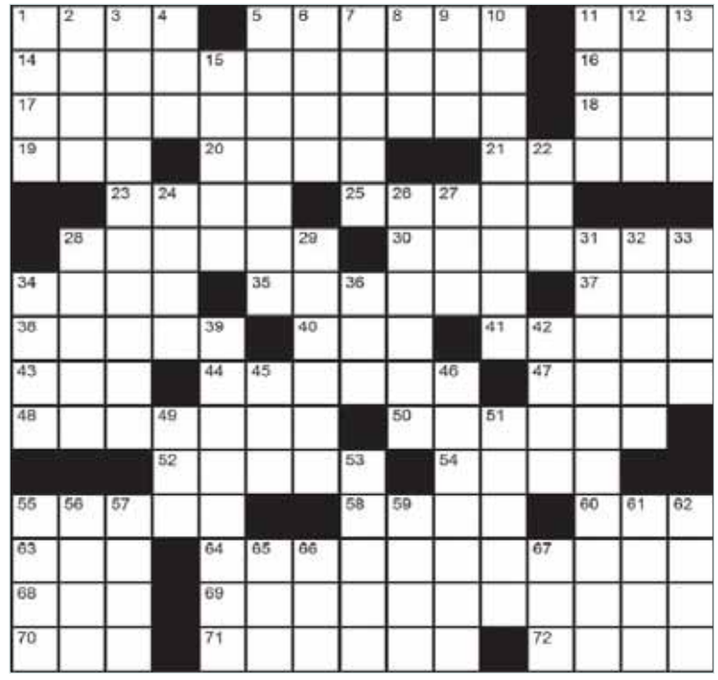
♐ Sagittarius
Nov. 23 - Dec. 21
Instead of looking for ways to back out of a commitment, look for ways to make it work in your favour. If you combine positive with lateral thinking your life can be a huge success.

♑ Capricorn
Dec. 22 - Jan. 20
A minor piece of information could have major repercussions today. Something you are told may sound unlikely but don't dismiss it. Strange things are taking place behind the scenes.

♒ Aquarius
Jan. 21 - Feb. 19
It may seem as if someone is talking down to you but likely it is your defensive attitude that makes it look that way. You need assistance and they are willing to help, so relax.

♓ Pisces
Feb. 20 - March 20
A problem that started out small has now grown to occupy your every waking thought. So, yes, it's high time you dealt with it.

Crossword: Canada Across and Down by Kelly Ann Buchanan



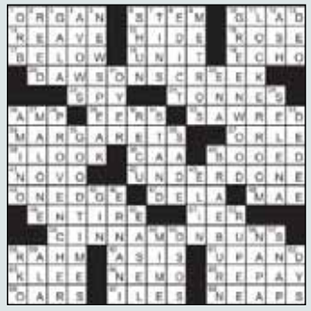
Across

1. Morning talk's Kelly
5. American-Canadian writer Mr. King
11. Truck co.
14. Vancouver attraction: 2 wds.
16. Be out of sorts
17. It's when celebs get special and/or unorthodox medical treatment: 2 wds.
18. Stew bit
19. Health or safety message, e.g.
20. Brain wave
21. Be a popular Twitter topic
23. Tree variety
25. "Amadeus" (1984) star Tom
28. Scant
30. Road traverser
34. Mr. Damon
35. Marriage partner
37. '_' __ for Avonlea
38. Ben of "Saving Hope"
40. Basketball's li'l Magic city
41. Mailing enclosures, commonly
43. Former-NBAer, __ Ming
44. Doodle, then erase, say
47. Bjork: "It's __ __ Quiet"
48. As Seen On TV blanket
50. Skull's eye place
52. Spew
54. Author Leon
55. Badlands formation
58. "To Live and Die __ _ _." (1985)
60. They: French
63. "Blessed __ the meek..."
64. Fancy event for politicians/dignitaries: 2 wds.
68. "__ Season" (2005)
69. Canadian History: Onondaga distance runner/Olympian (b.1887 - d.1949) who also served as a dispatch carrier in WWI: 2 wds.
70. Root vegetable
71. Declare, Bible-style
72. Author Ms. Sewell

Down

1. Host's 'let me know'
2. Celine Dion: "That's the Way __ __"
3. Peter __, Style Expert on "The Marilyn Denis Show"
4. Li'l response
5. Bids
6. David Pierce link
7. Ms. Winfrey
8. __ jacket
9. Sleeve
10. 1912 Canuck book... Sunshine __ of a Little Town
11. Be open-wide
12. Demeanor
13. Attired
15. Untruthfulness
22. King, in Portugal
24. 'Different' suffix
26. Throat parts
27. Guitar guru Mr. Paul
28. __ Calendar
29. Lyric poems
31. Makes the most of a money-making opportunity: 3 wds.
32. "Villain, thou __..." - Shakespeare
33. Gas station
34. Spring months
36. Hockey's Bobby
39. Hints at
42. "Born to Get Wild" by Steve __ feat. will.i.am
45. Never: German
46. Beach Boys: "__ It Be Nice"
49. Comprehend
51. Vancouver-born journalist Mr. Oliver
53. Deed
55. Justin Bieber hit
56. Fertilizer ingredient
57. Overbrim
59. Tyros, briefly
61. Trim
62. Miss: Spanish [abbr.]
65. __ _ degree
66. Ms. Irving
67. Sports org.

Friday's Crossword



Online

See today's answers at metronews.ca/answers

Conceptis Sudoku by Dave Green

How to play
Fill in the grid, so that every row, every column and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1-9. There is no math involved.

Friday's Sudoku

3	9	2	1	5	7	6	8	4
5	4	1	3	8	6	9	7	2
6	8	7	9	2	4	5	1	3
1	3	8	4	7	5	2	9	6
2	5	6	8	9	1	4	3	7
9	7	4	2	6	3	8	5	1
7	6	9	5	3	2	1	4	8
4	2	5	7	1	8	3	6	9
8	1	3	6	4	9	7	2	5

7			9	2	8			4
		3		4				
		4				6	7	
1				7				8
4	7		8	3	2		6	5
3				6				2
	8	7				2		
				9		5		
2			1	8	7			6

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